

REINCARNATION

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AMERICA'S NEXT PRESIDENT

Mr. Wilson's long period of service as president of the United States is almost over. He has had an extraordinary opportunity to affect the world's course of events and he has done well, it would seem.

He was wise, though dilatory, in acceding to the people's wish to resent German outrage. But one grieves over his negligence in protecting the rights of America where the full blaze of publicity could not be brought to bear upon his acts. The wrongs of the blood of America shed on Mexican soil still cry out to Heaven for justice!

The high hopes of the defeated nations of Europe that their submission would be followed by magnanimous treatment, hopes raised by the

mellifluous words of Mr. Wilson and his appeal to the fundamental ideals of humanity for justice and equal government have not been realized, partly because of the impoverishment of the victorious powers and partly because of their greed.

And the sad visitation of karma upon this highly idealistic leader in the form of cerebral paralysis seems to have been responsible for his gravely erroneous stubbornness in refusing American technical peace with Germany long months after hostilities were ended.

But, on the whole, Mr. Wilson seems to have responded fairly well to the inspiration he received and under his leadership America has made steady progress toward the realization of her high ideals.

Eagerly we study the signs of the hour for knowledge of Mr. Harding's character and responsiveness to the still, small voice of intuition. As we read newspaper accounts of his doings we try to think he is taking, week by week, a broader view of his privileges and functions, of the needs of the country and of America's relations to the rest of the world.

It is a mistake to suppose that the United States can stand isolated from the rest of the world. If the British Isles are but a little way from the shores of the European continent, America, in these days of swift movement, is not so very much farther! We have our obligations and our privileges. We hope the new president will not exaggerate his ideas about America's need to attend to her own affairs to the exclusion of healthy interest in those of Europe.

We cannot look without grief at the plight of Central and Eastern Europe and the spectacle of

half-murdered Armenia. Surely ways can be discovered by which our potent influence can be felt for the relief of those peoples. The hand of the Turk, unspeakable, unthinkably loathsome in his murderous passion, could be stayed by some insistence on the part of the allies if they were strongly united. The absence of America from the councils of the League of Nations is an absurdity, an outrage to the common sense of every man who knows the history of the League's formation. An American representative could do much to unify its action, to lift its ideals, to enforce justice for small nations now thrust aside by bullying powers and to encourage those peoples whose philosophy has gone awry to view life as large and full, with a place for all types and classes of men within their boundaries.

It is not reconstruction or rebuilding of our civilization that we need; it is steady growth and uninterrupted construction upon the secure foundations laid centuries ago under the guidance of Providence, that is required. Just a turn of the helm will safely guide the ship of state for America. May Mr. Harding have the power to hear and to obey!

W. V-H.

GROWING BELIEF IN REINCARNATION

It would be curious if we should find science and philosophy taking up again the old theory of metempsychosis, remodeling it to suit our present modes of religious and scientific thought, and launching it again on the wide ocean of human belief. But stranger things have happened in the history of human opinion.

James Freeman Clarke.

Sixty or seventy years ago, in our western world, the word "reincarnation," with the idea that it connotes, was almost unknown, save among the few scholars who were delving into the mysteries of Oriental literature. To-day it has become familiar. Take up the morning newspaper, the current magazine, the popular novel, and you are very likely to see it somewhere on their pages. As a very modern instance I will quote an advertisement which appeared in a morning paper of the best class in Boston a few days ago: "Next Serial Begins Sunday—*A King in Babylon*. By Burton Stevenson. When a motion picture producer takes a company to Egypt to make a film based on Henley's famous poem he little imagines that both his leading man and woman will become obsessed with the idea that they are reincarnations of an Egyptian king and princess. Strange things happen in the desert and as this story ends the movie producer and a scientist in the party are not wholly convinced the screen stars are wrong." Truly, reincarnation may be said to have "arrived" as an established word in an up-to-date vocabulary.

This familiarity with the word and theory of reincarnation has been of gradual growth and several factors have contributed to it. Through

the long centuries on the altar of truth the light has been kept burning—ofttimes but a little candle, yet throwing far-reaching beams out into a twilight world. There have been allusions in some ancient writers, definite statements in others, arguments and expositions. In the sixteenth century books began to appear, written in Latin; later others in German, French and English. In those earlier days the subject was discussed under the names of transmigration, metempsychosis and pre-existence. E. D. Walker, in his compilation entitled *Reincarnation*, published in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1888, gives a bibliography of two hundred and thirty books, pamphlets and articles printed under these titles and dating from 1591 to 1886.

In the year 1850 reincarnation received a decided impetus in its onward course when in France Allan Kardec published his work *Le Livre des Esprits* (The Spirits' Book). It was an exposition of spiritualistic beliefs about the cosmic scheme and the nature of man, and contained as a predominant tenet the doctrine of re-birth. The seed fell on fertile soil and had rich fruition on the continent, though it had little effect elsewhere. At about the same time the Oriental scholars began their work: Oldenburg, Max Müller and others, the first volume of Müller's edition of the *Sacred Books of the East* appearing in 1849. In 1879 Sir Edwin Arnold presented the world with his beautiful *Light of Asia*, founded on Buddhism and embodying the Buddhist doctrines, which has been the means of enlightening a wide circle of persons who would have studied the subject in no other form.

In America, also, there was definite interest shown. Here we might expect to find the transcendentalists openly and without exception advocating the doctrine. But such was not the case. Emerson was fully acquainted with and much influenced by Oriental philosophies and religions, as his published *Journals* plainly reveal, and he clearly teaches the doctrine of karma under the synonyms of Fate and Compensation as well as the creative power of thought. But reincarnation he dwells upon only in so veiled a manner as to make it recognizable by none save the initiated. The plainest statement I have been able to find concerning it is contained in the following sentence: "We wake and find ourselves on a stair. There are other stairs below us which we seem to have ascended; there are stairs above us, many a one, which seem to go upward and out of sight." "He believes, with Spenser," says Oliver Wendell Holmes, "that the soul makes its own body; and this involves the doctrine of pre-existence; a doctrine, older than Spenser, older than Plato or Pythagoras, having its cradle in India, fighting its way down through Greek philosophers and Christian fathers and German professors, to our own time, where it has found Pierre Leroux, Edward Beecher and Brigham Young among its numerous advocates. Each has his fancies on the subject." he concludes tolerantly, albeit somewhat superciliously, and goes on to apologize for Emerson's predilection for mystical utterances, especially as displayed in the poem, "Brahma," which he calls one of the poet's "spiritual divertissements." He continues, ". . . he played with the incommunicable, the inconceivable, the absolute,

the antinomies, as he would have played with a bundle of jackstraws. . Of course no one can hold Emerson responsible for the "Yoga" doctrine of Brahmaism, which he has amused himself with putting into verse. The Oriental side of Emerson's nature delighted in the narcotic dreams, born of the land of the poppy and of hashish. They add a peculiar charm to his poems, but it is not worth while to construct a philosophy out of them." I have quoted thus at length from Dr. Holmes because the sentiments he expresses were the sentiments of the great majority of his contemporaries—of Philistia in general, only a few appreciating this phase of Emerson's thought. Among these few were James Freeman Clarke, who wrote favorably of reincarnation in his *Ten Great Religions*, Frederick H. Hedge, who translated Herder's "Dialogues on Transmigration," Dr. Edward Beecher, who contended that " . . the facts of sin and depravity compel the acceptance of this doctrine (pre-existence) to exonerate God from the charge of maliciousness." and the Rev. William R. Alger. Mr. Alger, a Unitarian minister in Boston, in 1860 produced a book entitled *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*, in which he rejected the theory of reincarnation, characterizing it as a "plausible delusion." But, after fifteen years of investigation, he issued a new edition containing his more mature judgment which was in favor of the doctrine.

Perhaps no writer has done so much to popularize the theory of reincarnation as Lafcadio Hearn in his many volumes on Japan. Dealing with the subject in a serious and sympathetic manner, showing his deep interest, yet without

any insistence that might arouse a suspicion of proselytism, his books were read primarily for their charming literary quality and for the information they gave about an interesting and little-known people, while incidentally his readers gained a knowledge of certain valuable tenets of Eastern philosophy, notably reincarnation and karma, which Hearn had recognized as exerting a profound effect on the Japanese populace. He undoubtedly influenced, and continues to influence, a great many persons toward a favorable consideration of these doctrines and prepared the way for more serious study.

Other writers have during the past twenty-five years produced interesting stories based on reincarnation: among them Francis Marion Crawford, Mrs. Campbell Praed and Algernon Blackwood.

The Theosophical Society did not in its beginning put much emphasis on reincarnation, but in 1886 a paper on the subject was given at the London Lodge. Since then have been published under the auspices of the Society many books, pamphlets and articles and lectures. Other organizations beside the Theosophical Society include reincarnation among their teachings. The Vedanta movement, having its headquarters in Boston and centers in various other places, is an active agent. There are also the Rosicrucians, the Tingley Theosophical movement, many of the "New Thoughtists," the Bahais, the Aquarians and no doubt other less known associations.

Helen G. Crawford.

REINCARNATION AND EDUCATION

In the world of education there are numbers of men who recognise the fact that is to be—the man that will emerge some fifteen or twenty years hence. The daily program, the curriculum that lasts from year to year through the various grades and on through college and schools for specialisation are planned and wrought out, all for this man that is to be.

It is well to have an aim, an ideal, and to dream large and noble things for the youths of our land, but—how we would like to see vision extend farther into the future and have our educators making plans for the man that is to emerge several incarnations hence—to plan for the ego rather than for the personality!

This planning for the development of the ego is not the impossible, absurd thing that it may seem, at first, to those who have not looked at the matter of education from this standpoint.

In a Christian land everybody is familiar with the idea that a man has a soul. Now, if we will only change this wording to that of 'a man is a soul' and then recognise the fact that that soul is evolving we have taken the initial step in the work of the true education.

Most surely America has those among its educators who are not only willing but who have the intuition and the patience to make such plans.

Pauline Trueblood.

A SONNET BY MRS. BROWNING

We are taught that "the operations of the actual laws of karma are not to be studied until the disciple has reached the point at which those laws no longer affect himself."* He then, we may imagine, will be able to see mankind objectively, see him all at once on the Great Way moving on to completeness—each tiny unit to his appointed place in the consciousness of God.

On the other hand, even in these days of small things for us children, we are enjoined to try to see the facts of life in their relation to causes, so that we may gain an ever increasing inclusiveness in our view of the happenings of existence. If we view life as stationary, we are told, we miss the true solution; life is flowing like a mighty river. And nowhere is a phase of this conception more exquisitely suggested than in the sonnet of Elizabeth Browning, "A Musical Instrument."

We know that the Great People see what is happening and see our suffering, too; we know that They enter into the pains of Their little ones as tender parents do; but Their inclusive view and Their knowledge of the future for which we are being shaped is so constantly present with Them that They are able to endure the sight of our tears.

In her sonnet Elizabeth Browning seems to have taken into consideration the distinction between the methods of the mighty Angels who are Dispensers of karma, and the methods of Those Com-

*From "the exquisite fragment on *Karma*, which follows *Light on the Path*."

passionate Ones from our own evolution. Our own great Masters will work with less ruthlessness, we may venture to believe, never unnecessarily,—in the words of the sonnet,—“spreading ruin and scattering ban, . . . And breaking the golden lilies afloat with the Dragon-fly on the river”!

What was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river;
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sat the great god Pan,
While turbidly flow'd the great river;
And hack'd and hew'd as a great god can
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of the leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan
(How tall it stood in the river!),
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notch'd the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sat by the river.

“This is the way,” laugh'd the great god Pan
(Laugh'd while he sat by the river),
“The only way, since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed.”
Then dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain—
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds of the river.

Clara Jerome Kochersperger.



CHANNELS

Make channels for the streams of Love,
Where they may broadly run;
And love has overflowing streams
To fill them every one.

But if at any time thou cease
Such channels to provide,
The very founts of love for thee
Will soon be parched and dried.

For we must share, if we would keep,
That good thing from above;
Ceasing to give, we cease to have—
Such is the law of love.

Archbishop Trench.

THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE

Since the United States was peopled chiefly by Europe it is the child of that continent; it inherits its traditions, its religion, its philosophy—in a word, its civilization,—from Europe.

The heart of the United States turns with a great longing of sympathy towards Europe when crises come. Our traditional policy of isolation was perhaps justified, indeed almost a necessity in the early days. But our wars with England and with Spain gave us the feeling that we have our responsibilities and our right among the nations of the world. And our participation in the recent conflict has given us physical contact, through our two millions of soldiers, with the people and the life of Europe.

One supposes that the karmic interrelations between the two continents will never be resolved until karma is no more; that the activities in which they have engaged in the past will be repeated through all the coming ages of imperfection.

With the different lands of Europe we have different ties, some stronger by far than others, but most of them are of those of good-will, of gratitude for favors received.

Now, in the great distress of Europe that so profoundly affects the world, America's good offices, with her most generous thoughts and feelings, ought to be exercised.

The starving should be fed by America; the naked be clothed. But, far more than that, the influence of our words in counsel should be ex-

exercised in favor of policies that will soon set hatred and revenge in the background of our world-life and let the flow of human life run smoothly.

W. V-H.



CAN SUFFERING EVER BE UNDESERVED?

The question, "Can suffering ever be undeserved?" may also be put in this way: "Can a man reap what he has not sown?" Or, in other words, "Can anything come to a man which he has not caused?"

Considering the incidents of this life only, it would seem to be folly to assert that everything that came to a man was caused by some act of his own doing. The fact of birth itself, with its varied environment of poverty and wealth, and the different accompanying conditions of good and bad heredity, would be a denial of the working of any law of justice, or cause and effect. If we consider every baby a brand new soul fresh from the hand of God, the surroundings in which it finds itself must be accounted for on some other basis than the law of justice, or cause and effect.

But we intuitively feel that God is just, and that He would most assuredly create a system of nat-

ural law in which justice would be the predominant and fundamental note. We excuse the apparent ever-present lack of justice in the universe by saying that it is still in the process of making, and that when it is finally all worked out there will be recompense and justice for all.

Evolution, progressive growth, permits of long periods of time in the development of the soul. The soul that takes possession of a child is not a newly created thing, but has been in existence for ages, taking birth from time to time in a human body in order to gain knowledge and experience.

Naturally, the growth of the soul is a very long process, continuing during many lives on earth. The soul of a man—which is really the man, the body being simply the house in which he lives—is the product of centuries of progressive development. Consequently it is easy to surmise that some souls would outstrip others in the race for perfection. Thus we find some souls are more developed than others, and we call them older souls. This fact accounts for the differences we see in men. The soul takes a body in keeping with its development, for nature would not furnish an instrument that the soul could not use. We study the form and texture of the body because they indicate the kind of a soul enclosed within.

Now this theory of rebirth is built upon the law of cause and effect. A soul takes a body and lives a life on earth. The thoughts and acts of that life determine what kind of a start it will have in its next earthly life. A man does not just happen to be where he finds himself at birth. Nor are the faculties which he discovers to be at his command the mere product of chance. The

knowledge he learns in one life is brought back as latent faculties in the next incarnation. What we gain we never lose. The thought and deed seeds sown in one life often lie dormant until the soul again returns to earth, when they blossom into the achievement-flowers of a glorious destiny.

Returning to our question, "Can suffering ever be undeserved?," we find that this has been one of the most discussed problems that has come down through the ages. The allegorical *Book of Job* takes up this question in a very detailed manner. Like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* it is a discussion and a setting forth of a moral truth in a figurative manner. It is really an extended metaphor.

To enable man to evolve into a God, he must have free will. This makes it possible for him to choose to work with the system or against it. A man is an individualised center of divine life. The same divine life that flows through him also streams through all other human beings. Thought of in this way, we are all one Life. This is the principle of unity. So when we consider this question of cause and effect in its relation to human conduct and the happiness and suffering of man, individually, we must also take into consideration its bearing on the welfare of humanity, as a totality. We not only have an individual karma, an eastern term denoting cause and effect, but the whole human family in its progress down through the ages has made for itself a karma of its own, which the human race as a whole must at some time pay back to the universe. Looked at in this light, the sin of one is the sin of all. When an individual begins to approach the idea of unity in his life, when he commences to see

and feel that he is a part of the whole and one with all other human beings, then through this oneness, their suffering becomes his. He not only has sympathy for others, but he responds to their joys and sorrows in a way we cannot exactly understand or describe and we say that he feels *with* them. He gains a larger view of life and people. He is charity personified. He strives not for his own advancement, but for that of the system. Having harmonised his own thought-world he may turn his attention to the thought-worlds of others and by some kind of mental alchemy offer himself as an atonement for their mistakes, by sharing their burdens with them.

Can suffering ever be undeserved? We answer, As a general proposition, no; but a very highly evolved soul may voluntarily assume and endure suffering which as an individual he cannot be said to have deserved.

Fred. B. Humphrey.



Heaven is not reached at a single bound,
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.

J. G. Holland.

THE CAUSES OF HUMAN HAPPENINGS

We must not fall into the habit of thinking that karma is the sole directing force in our lives. There are many others.

It is our karma that shapes our individual and collective lives as to all the minor matters of personality. But the power and the will of God are perpetually driving through us, supplying us with the energy which we are diverting to our daily uses. It is also He Who holds us to our larger determinations.

Of course it is not the Solar Deity Who manages all details. A host of His aides do that. It gives to our lives a measure of satisfaction to know Who the Great Beings are Who have charge of this part of the work. And our interest grows as we learn how They have attained Their lofty power and Their god-like right to participate in the alleviation of human suffering while furthering the greater ends of our destiny.

They are of various levels of authority and power; the estate and places of the lower groups are included in those of the greater Ones. All are evolving; all have Their necessity of effort and of growth. Their places become more and more inclusive as they grow in the Grace of God. Their purposes, also, are successively inclusive, the greater of the lesser.

And it is this phase of the great inner life, far transcending the complexity and splendid import of the more material life of the every-day world, that gives loftiest interest to the life of occultism. While Those Who have just gained the level of adeptship are engaged in activities that

are very near to our ordinary human activity and interest and are concerned largely with our globe, Those Who have gone farther by a single grade have duties that include the labors and responsibilities of Those of the first grade and give Them authority that extends to the limits of the solar system at large. Still further on, the relations between solar systems within our galaxy of suns must be studied and must be made the object and field of spiritual action. What and Who are the high gods that preside at these levels of consciousness I do not know.

The cares of these great beings include the necessity of adjusting the life of our own age and times to suit the requirements of coming world-periods, rounds and chains.

The labors of each world-period must be carried forward, in a degree and to an extent in correspondence, as nearly as may be, with the great plan of the Logos. One supposes there are minima of requirement below which flat failure would have to be scored and maxima above which the highest success might be considered to have been attained.

The meaning of the higher fruition of human effort in evolving and accomplishing is beyond our powers of imagination. The strong, even if not the maximum, success of our life of this world-period means that a powerful hierarchy will have been prepared to carry on the work of the next world-life on Mercury, thus enabling Those in loftier realms to proceed to duties far more inclusive than those They had formerly compassed in Their fields of responsibility.

Hence the severity of the pressure of our human yoke of duty in action may not be alleviated until

the world's karma has been cleared away at least to the point of minimum requirement.

It is Those in the loftiest fields of responsibility Who must decide just when the requirement of strenuous labor has been met and when the burden of human suffering has been carried as far as needed for the age.

It is the will and the energy of the Logos that keep us full of power to do and of purpose to find and fulfill His plan. It is the karma of our past lives that gives opportunity and limitation of personality to us. But it is the will and purpose of God and His ministers that include all and lift and carry us on and through life in major ways. "There is a Divinity that shapes our ends rough-hew them how we will."

So, since it is not karma that presses us forward through life, but the power and the will of God, we must not feel that we are subject to fate, but that it is the great current of evolution in which we are set and that our karma merely makes the eddies in the waters nearest us, sometimes apparently impeding our progress, sometimes seemingly lifting us onward over impediments.

We ought to try to see over and beyond our karma and its action and effects into the large purpose and current of our existence. There we will find our true destiny; there we will be able to resolve the inner mystery of our being and find how to set aside the deepest contradictions of life. In the contemplation of the final destiny of humanity we can begin to understand and reconcile the great agony of our race in co-existence with the mercy of God.

W. V-H.

KARMIC REACTIONS

I have just been watching a very complicated machine do its work, and the thought came to me that if a man could apply his knowledge to adjusting the reactions in his personal experiences as he does in the making of a machine, what a wonderful amount of progress he could accomplish in a short time! The machine is quite complex, but all the reactions are cared for in such ways that they help to accomplish the work with the least loss of motion or energy.

We know that there are several reasons why the man cannot do this, but the chief one is that he does not see or cognize all the material that he deals with. In the world of action he can calculate with great precision what the return will be on the physical plane but he loses sight of the feelings and thoughts that accompany the act and it is they that blight or bless.

When a man learns that he has three very complex machines—physical, astral and mental bodies—that he must keep adjusted and harmonised, when he knows the law that applies in the world of emotion, in the world of thought, then will he be able to do swift and effective work in his human progress.

This outer work in the world of mechanics has its legitimate place in the man's development, for the patience, perseverance, discrimination and many other worthy qualities have been gained and are now at his command for the more noble work of world-service and self-culture.

Pauline Trueblood.

CATS

In Arthur Brisbane's column in the *New York American*, Oct. 18, 1919, appears the following:

Mrs. Margaret Himer died with her cat in her arms. Committing suicide by turning on the gas she decided to take the cat with her, that it also might escape a cruel world. They went out together and were found lying on the kitchen floor.

Whither did they go? Or rather in what direction did the cat go? We know, of course, that the woman, according to her deserts, went up or down. But what about the cat she took along? Did its life end absolutely and forever when the gas did its work, while Mrs. Himer's spirit went on to another life? If that is so, the lady's decision to take the cat along was doubly hard on the cat.

The religion that includes more human beings than any other in the world tells you that the cat had a soul, probably once in a human body, and that the soul went on when the cat died and found a residence here on earth in some other body. Gentlemen of the Buddhist faith believe that the cat very probably became a woman and the woman a cat after the gas did its work.

We do not believe that.

But we do not know what became of that cat. Whether it has a soul or not, the cat represents *consciousness*, the power that controls matter through force.

We know that matter and force are indestructible, and it seems reasonable to believe that consciousness which eludes our experiments is also indestructible. We should know much more than we know now if we could tell exactly what happened to Mrs. Himer and Minnie, her cat, when their hearts stopped beating.

This is interesting to reincarnationists because it voices a query which they can not ignore and for which they must provide an answer.

Of course, many there are who still believe that the woman "went up or down according to her deserts," but reincarnationists know that there is

no "up or down according to deserts," and that the woman's soul has simply returned to the discarnate state, an intangible plane of tranquil repose not manifest to our physical senses; and, although that plane *may* extend up or down, its principal locality, for souls seeking to return, is right here amongst the living souls on earth.

There can be no possible question about this, for souls can not return without rebirth through humans, and they could not make contact for rebirth did they not occupy the same environment as the living. We must accept this as true as there is no alternative, and this then becomes a fact that gives plausibility to the claims of spiritualists that spirits can communicate with us, and bids us to consider their claims with open minds.

What of the cat? Did it have a soul? It certainly had consciousness, and it could not have that without mind, spirit or soul.

Of course, it is a crude and undeveloped soul from a human standpoint, but from the cat's viewpoint, a very much developed soul from the time, in former ages, when it lived as a wild animal, an enemy to man, and lacking in all those fine qualities that it has gradually acquired in its intimate relation with man since it was admitted to his home and care in consideration of its services as rodent destroyer.

How much higher can the cat develop? Who knows? See what wonderful things animal trainers have done with cats. When trained cats die their souls will retain potentially all they have learned through incarnate experiences. It is a well known fact that animal trainers can not train *any* animal, but must select carefully those of

suitable mentality, showing clearly that differences exist. What causes these differences and makes some animals more knowing than others of their kind? Surely the evolutionary development that can only be had in one way, through the experience gained in carnate life, and the experience necessary that will enable an animal to do tricks with man must have been gained in its former intercourse with man, and it is therefore man's soul that is helping the animal soul upward.

Therefore, answering Mr. Brisbane's query, let us say: Yes! Mrs. Himer's cat had a soul, which, like the soul of its mistress, simply returned to the discarnate state to await reincarnation, but when it returns it will be as a cat and not as a woman.

William W. Weitling.



OUR FUTURE

Men who speak or think of the future may have very different ideas in mind, but most of these ideas have to do with very limited periods of time. It is hard for men to conceive of the future unless it has a personal interest for them, and for most men this personal interest does not go much farther than their expected span of life.

Perhaps the most characteristic fact about students of reincarnation is the vastly larger view of life which they are able to hold and make use of. They regard the life of the man not as shut in between birth and death, but as a continuous thread which runs through the ages which count off the steps in the evolution of a solar system. In the long past every man has lived many times; out of all that past has been developed what he is to-day. This represents the fixed element in man's evolution,—that which has become definitely built into his very structure, and which makes up his very life qualities. The vast future lies open before him, with all its vast possibilities; partly conceivable and partly not. Over this future man has a determining power of influence, but in dealing with it there is also a considerable limitation which appears, without apparent reason, unexpectedly; this element is the as yet unexhausted part of all his karma of the past.

Those men who are able to entertain the larger view of human life are able to some extent to deal intelligently with their own future, to take a strong hand in the shaping of their own future destiny; for such men it becomes a matter of interest to know in general terms what are their

own powers and limitations in working out their own destiny, especially how they may best exert their own efforts and energies.

Mr. Leadbeater, one of our great authorities on karma and reincarnation, has said that by far the greater part of what happens to a man in his present life on earth is not the result of his actions of past lives, but is the outworking of karmic energies generated in the present life; perhaps only ten per cent. is due to karma of past lives. Therefore, in nine cases out of ten we reap what we have sown in the same life. This means that it is only in such cases as can not be at all accounted for by causes set going in our present life that we have a right to say the events were the results of our past lives.

We are also told by our teachers that the karma of all our past lives which is still undischarged is very great and that most of it is on the negative side, meaning that it will bring us difficulties and suffering. This is because in our long past we were more ignorant and had less control over our lower nature and its desires; hence we acted most frequently in selfish ways and inflicted sufferings upon other living creatures. At this time in human evolution most civilized people make far more "good" karma than "bad,"—that is, on the whole they act in accordance with the Good Law and not against it, so that the karma generated will result in helpful rather than in hurtful reactions.

From these several statements we can see that, roughly speaking, ten per cent. of our actions, or the karma generated in our present life, will be met again and worked out in future lives, and

probably most of it will be positive, or helpful. Of the total reactions, or karma, which is worked out, in this life, about ten per cent. comes from past lives, and most of them are likely to be "bad," or negative.

Furthermore, we may account for the great quantity of undischarged karma existing at this time for a man by the inference that in the early part of a man's long series of earth-lives he generated in any average life more karma than he used up in the same life. Also we may infer that in this early part of his evolution the man probably did not receive quite as much negative karma from his past lives, to work out, as he justly deserved. Being as yet weak and unevolved, he was treated with mercy rather than with justice by the Karmic Authorities, and given proportionately more of "good" karma out of his karmic bank account than he generated of the same kind. In this way he was allowed to develop and grow more swiftly than he would have done if he reaped exactly in proportion as he sowed. This method of apportioning his old, unexhausted karma to the man would result in an ever-increasing preponderance of "bad" karma in his bank account with Nature.

Even at this time the man may, and probably is, treated more mercifully than he deserves at the hands of the Karmic Authorities. This would result in building up the man's energies in the personality a little more, and is destroying his evil tendencies a little less than would justly correspond to his generation of positive and negative karma.

We may illustrate these ideas by an arbitrarily

chosen system of numbers. Let us assume that at this period of human evolution the average civilized man makes about as much karma as he uses up, which assumption is probably nearly true.

He generates, let us say, 100 units of karma, of which 60 are positive and 40 negative. Of these he will use up 90 units, 55 positive and 35 negative, leaving 10 units, 5 of each kind to go into the great mass of karma which he will exhaust in future lives. When he was born the old karma might be represented by 1,000,000 units, of which only 300,000 are positive. Out of these he gets 10 units discharged upon him apparently undeservedly and not caused by himself,—6 negative and 4 positive.

This incarnation would be an easy-going one: not a great deal of progress is made, but there is a substantial strengthening of the man's powers, and there is much more of happiness than of sorrow, for he has lived away 59 positive and 41 negative units. When he dies he will still have 1,000,000 units of karma. There is the very small gain of 1 unit on the positive side, while the large negative mass has been decreased by 1 unit.

For an early stage of his evolution the figures might be: total karma at birth, 200,000, of which 10,000 are positive; generated, 40 units, of which 5 are positive; used up 25 units, of which 5 are positive; used up also out of old fund 10 units, of which 2 are positive. At death there would be 200,005 units, the positive remaining 10,000. The totals before and after this life are about the same, but there has been growth, especially in increased power of action, and although this results in producing more negative than positive

karma, the personality of the man has grown.

These figures may seem to indicate too slow an evolution, but it is probably hard to conceive of the many millions of years in which the advanced part of humanity has been engaged in developing the powers of consciousness which it now uses so freely and in many cases automatically or sub-consciously. Think of the enormous time that human beings spend in learning a little skill in the personality, and then try to imagine the long time needed to develop real powers of character!

Remember that the figures given for the civilized man represent a very happy and easy-going life, yet it makes a distinct contribution to the evolution of the ego. Remember, furthermore, that the man is still a pleasure-seeker and not at all philanthropic.

We may now use the ideas as illustrated in arbitrary figures and recognize several results which the aspiring ego may try to realize, in order that he may be more free to serve unhampered by a heavy load of karma:

The aspiring man must strive for greater productivity. He should be able to generate instead of 100 units, say a thousand. By doing his best work with love in his heart, with determination and with due regard to high ethical values, he should generate only, say, 70 negative units out of 1,000.

The aspiring man develops endurance. This enables him to bear a discharge of, say, 60 negative units instead of only 6. These powers of productivity and endurance would increase enormously in the course of a few lives of strenuous effort. The increase is rather by multiplying former

achievements than by adding even large increments to them.

Another point, and a very important one, is that the aspirant should not be afraid to throw his "good" karma into the grinding mill and use it up. It will greatly develop his powers and yield quick returns. To spend one's time in good deeds in order to counterbalance the great weight of unexhausted negative karma is like toiling for pennies; it is much better freely to spend one's resources in increasing one's capacities. The aspirant should develop faith in the Good Law and Its ability to take care of Its servants, as well as work for material wealth which a little discharge of negative karma can so swiftly wipe away. After all, we would surely have a long and laborious time working off our debts to Nature, unless we could prove ourselves worthy of being entrusted with greater powers to be used, not for ourselves, but for the helping of humanity, the lightening of its burdens, and the spreading of the knowledge of the great truths.

It has been said that to try to become free of our own karma is very much like trying to lift ourselves by our own bootstraps! But there are Those Who have become free and are always ready to help the younger ones. *Light on the Path* says: "Know, O disciple! that those who have passed through the silence, and felt its peace, and retained its strength, they long that you shall pass through it also. Therefore, in the Hall of Learning, when he is capable of entering there, the disciple will always find his Master." With this help the man need fear not, but press firmly on.

C. S.

KARMA

Many students of the laws of life seem to find in karma something of harshness, repulsion and even dread. It has been said that they have replaced the orthodox conception of the devil with the idea of karma.

Of course karma is a vast subject for study, and students may easily find parts of it which are apparently terrible and dreadful. Karma is that which brings upon us the exact reactions of all our actions, including thoughts and feelings. This often means painful experiences. But we must not forget that karma is much more.

Mrs. Annie Besant has defined karma as the interrelation of all things. The causal interrelation is only very partial, because it is only an appearance connected with the flow of all life through the great ocean of time. All things are interrelated much more intimately, for in the higher realms of consciousness there is union of all beings. That means there is real unity in the midst of apparent diversity.

Our lives are made up of experiences in consciousness. Through them we contact the larger universe and grow into it.

Now karma is the means by which we make these contacts, which are our growing-points into the larger universe. By means of karma we find our way, the way of our evolving. The light on the way we must find within ourselves, but the interest and joy of the way is found in seeing clearly the incidents, events, which are on the way, and in living in them strongly, but selflessly.

C. S.

AIDING DISTRESSED PEOPLES

"Europe is in rags," says Mr. Lloyd George, and Asia is dying in the Near East and in Mongolia. The distress and the horror of death, disease, hunger and misery are so great that those who make appeal for aid will not put in print the full details of the appalling facts.

Will Mr. Harding, American President-elect, favor his government's aiding officially the distressed peoples? Will he put the government official machinery at the service of those who are laboring to give aid? Such assistance would hasten all relief and save thousands of lives.

We trust all our readers, everywhere, are doing all in their power to help in this great emergency.

Food, clothing and money are needed! Enquiries and contributions may be sent to *The European Aid Committee*, 706 Fine Arts Building, Chicago, Illinois.

W. V-H.

FIELD NOTES

Forty certificates for membership in the *Legion* have just been sent to Holland, also a charter for a Group at Heerlen. The work in Holland is progressing steadily and has become fairly well known throughout the country.

Hollywood Group has held about twenty meetings since organising on April 23, 1920. Ten new members have joined the original eighteen. Various pamphlets and books on karma and reincarnation have been studied. On Christmas Eve a very delightful children's party was held, enlivened with refreshments and presents.

The *Legion* is steadily growing. You may help it to do its work by finding new members and by organizing new Groups. Write for information on how to proceed.